



Garrion People's Housing Co-op

Spring 2008 Newsletter

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Emergency Contact Numbers

Office Closure

Rent Increase

Rent Payments

Garden Maintenance Contract

New Build Development

Skip Delivery

Important Safety Information

Kitchen Replacement Program

Home Safety Assessment

Annual Gas Servicing

Soccerarena

Tenant Satisfaction Survey

Membership

Housing List

Website Information

Close Cleaning

Staff

Useful Numbers

Welcome to the Spring 2008 edition of Garrion People's Housing Co-op's newsletter. We hope that the information contained is informative to you. Please remember that our newsletters are also available online at www.gphc.org.uk.

Emergency Contact Numbers



Emergency Numbers (24hrs)

Saltire 0845 606 1555

Gas Central Heating Repairs

Maintenance & Property Care 01236 624100

All other emergency repairs

National Grid 0800 111 999

Gas Leaks (Transco)

Scottish Power 0845 272 7999

Loss of electricity supply

Scottish Water 0845 601 8855

Loss of water supply or problems with mains water supply

Office Closure

Due to the Easter holidays the co-operative will be closed from **1pm on Thursday 20th March 2008 and will reopen at 9am on Tuesday 25th March 2008.**

Should you require any assistance during the public holidays please refer to the emergency contact numbers above.

Rent Increase

All tenants were sent letters in February 2008 advising of the 5% rental increase due to commence on 1 April 2008. Please ensure you have amended your payments by this time and if you pay by standing order, you must advise your bank of the new amount to be paid

*'Please remember
that the Co-op
does not provide
any rent free
periods
throughout the
year'*

Rent Payments

It is very important that the Co-op receives rent payments on time. Those who are experiencing difficulties with rent payments should contact Elaine Hyslop (Housing Officer) immediately. You will be provided with assistance and Elaine can also make appointments with appropriate agencies such as:-

*Money Advice, Citizens Advice Bureau
Welfare Rights, Debt Counselling*

Early contact with the Co-op could avoid legal action commencing. Costs for legal action for rent arrears are met by the tenant. Please do not ignore any letters you receive for rent arrears.

Garden Maintenance Contract

Now that the growing season has again commenced, it is very important that those with exclusive use of gardens keep them in a good condition. Inspections throughout the estate are regular so please remember to ensure your grass is cut when required and free of litter at all times. The grounds maintenance contract will commence week beginning 31 March 2008, and Land Engineering will again carry out all maintenance work for the Co-op in relation to common grass and shrub areas.



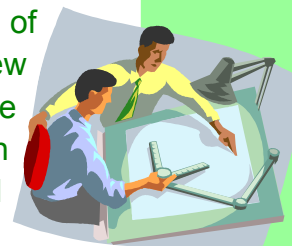
There have been incidents in the past where dog fouling has occurred in areas that were due to be cut by the contractor. As a result, the grass cutting was not carried out and action taken where necessary by the Co-op. Please ensure that if you have a dog, it is exercised properly and you have an ample supply of poop scoops and bags (available free from the Co-op)

Those tenants who previously had their grass cut by the contractor should note that this should automatically continue. The Co-op only instructs the contractor to cut grass in private gardens where there is a medical issue.

We will also be looking at gardens throughout the year to judge the best kept and once again, prizes will be awarded to those who are judged (independently) to be in excellent condition.

New Build Development

The Co-op are pleased to announce that after a long period of negotiations planning permission has now been approved for 55 new build units at Castlehill Road, 25 for rent and 30 for sale. We are now awaiting Building Warrant and Roads Consent from North Lanarkshire Council's Roads Department. It is anticipated that a full site start will take place later this year.



Negotiations are underway regarding the site at the bottom half of Gowkthraple and we will keep you informed of progress

Skip Delivery

Please see below the schedule for future skip deliveries in the area. The skips will be delivered four weekly as follows:-

Thursday 3rd April 2008 - 1-23 Heathfield

Thursday 1st May 2008 - 158-188 Heathfield

Thursday 29th May 2008 - Bottom of Woodgreen Court

Thursday 26th June 2008 - 94-124 Heathfield

Thursday 24th July 2008 - 1-23 Heathfield

We also provide a skip quarterly to our residents of Law View Sheltered Housing Complex in Overtown and the dates are as follows :

Monday 21st April 2008

Monday 14th July 2008

Please be careful when using the facility, which is usually available between 8.30am and 12.30pm. To make the most of the skip service please try to flatten any items such as cardboard boxes, drawer units, etc. before putting them in the skip. All residents are asked to ensure that any bulk items placed in the skip are broken down as much as possible beforehand. There have been occasions where large pieces of furniture are dumped and this has left little room for other items in the skip.

For health and safety reasons our Caretakers are unable to lift heavy items such as cookers, fridges, washing machines, etc. Please use the uplift service provided by North Lanarkshire Council (*three free uplifts per year*) for any items you are unable to lift into the skip by yourself.

Important Safety Information

Following the tragic death of Rhianna Hardie and a similar case in Cornwall in 2002, Coroner Michael Rose said the problem with the immersion water heater thermostat had caused hot water to flood the cold water tank, and in combination with an inadequate tank supporting base, the tank failed causing a large volume of near boiling storage tank water to pour through ceilings onto occupants below. The advice below is for tenants concerned about their hot water system.

The information to follow should help tenants to be aware of the warning signs and understand what to do if they suspect a problem. **It is, of course, extremely rare for these problems to occur and the vast majority of hot water systems are safe.**

Hot water systems at risk:

This warning applies to domestic hot water systems that include a fixed all-electric or part-electric immersion heater or other hot water heating appliance connected to a hot water storage cylinder in conjunction with a plastic cold water storage cistern or 'tank/header tank' located in the roof space.



Warning signs include:

1. **Excessively high water temperature at the hot tap.** The temperature should not normally exceed 65 degrees centigrade unless it is heated by solid fuel.
2. **Hot or warm water running from your cold water taps** if they are not supplied direct from the mains.
3. **Excessive noise from the hot water cylinder**, such as loud gurgling, hissing or noise similar to an electrical kettle boiling.
4. **Condensation / steam in the loft or tank cupboard.**

Note

Tenants (especially parents, guardians and carers) should be aware of the scalding risks associated with unsupervised thermostat setting and use of domestic hot water by children or infirm persons. This particularly applies to unsupervised filled baths.

Action to take

If you think there may be a problem, take the following actions:

1. **Switch off the hot water system.** (If you have a solid fuel system, you cannot turn it off – see point 2).
2. **Run the hot tap immediately.** This will run off the hot water in the tank and replenish it with cold from the mains. (If you have a solid fuel system, you cannot turn it off so just keep your hot tap running until the water has cooled down).

Immediately Contact Saltire on 0845 606 1555 (24 hour emergency service) for Gas systems. Or Maintenance and Property Care on 01236 624 100 (24 hour emergency service) for electric hot water systems.

Kitchen Replacement Programme

If your kitchen is due to be renewed you will already have received a letter confirming the contractors details. The contract is due to start on 31st March and will last for a period of 12 weeks.

You will receive seven days notice before work commences to allow you time to arrange access to your property.

Home Safety Assessment

The Co-op works in partnership with Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, with a view to promoting home safety. We are encouraging tenants to take this opportunity to have a home safety assessment carried out by the local Fire and Rescue team.

There is no cost involved and you will be given good advice on how to protect you and your family within the home. Feedback from those who have received a visit in the past has been very positive. A leaflet is enclosed with this newsletter with contact details but if you would like the Co-op to make an appointment for a visit to your home by Strathclyde Fire and Rescue, please contact us and we will be happy to help.



Annual Gas Servicing

All tenants with gas in their homes will be aware how important it is that a service is carried out on an annual basis. Anyone due a gas service is contacted by the Co-op with an appointment date and will then be advised as a reminder by Saltire Facilities Management Ltd, who will carry out the work. Ample notice is given so that arrangements can be made should the date and time be unsuitable. It is essential that a servicing is carried out to your property on a date agreed. Continuous failure to provide access will result in the Co-op ultimately forcing access to a property, with the tenant being recharged for the work incurred. Please also ensure that you test any carbon monoxide detector in your home, as well as smoke alarms regularly.

Gas Central Heating Breakdown

If you have a gas central heating breakdown at any time, please remember that you are entitled to temporary heating and hot water facilities. Please ensure you take advantage of temporary heaters as it can take a few days for Saltire to replace certain parts within central heating systems.

Saltire can be contacted on **0845 606 1555** (24hrs).

'Failure to provide access may result in entry being forced to your home'



Soccerarena

As you will no doubt be aware, the Soccerarena located at Castlehill Primary School has been a resounding success since it started in the Spring of 2007.

It is hoped that the Soccerarena will continue during April and the months ahead and the Co-op can confirm that flyers will be distributed around the local schools, with consultation taking place between pupils and North Lanarkshire Leisure with a view to looking at popular dates for the facility.

The Co-op will, as always, keep our tenants and children informed of progress.

Tenant Satisfaction

The Co-operative regularly monitor levels of satisfaction in all aspects of our service delivery to tenants. It would assist the Co-operative if all survey forms issued to you covering the following subjects were returned directly to the office or given to the Estate Caretaker/Maintenance Assistant.

Complaints, Repairs, Post Inspections, Right to Repair

Membership

We are always actively encouraging membership of the co-op, which costs a one off fee of £1. The membership allows you to observe management committee meetings and vote or stand for election at the Co-op's Annual General Meeting, which is held in September of each year. Applications for membership are available at the co-op's reception or we can deliver one to you on request.

Committee News

Please find below a list of our Management Committee:-

Edith Gilmour, Chairperson	Lynne McLean
David Cooper, Vice Chair	Frank Johnston
William Caldwell, Secretary	Joan Johnston
Elizabeth Cooper, Treasurer	George Main
Jimmy Deas	Fay Main
Marion Cathcart	Betty Baillie
William Gilmour	Susan Reed

Housing List

The Co-op is always encouraging applicants to join our housing list. We currently have a healthy demand for properties that become available but are still seeking new applicants to apply for rehousing.

If you wish to receive an application form or know someone who wishes to apply please contact the office or download an application form from our website at :-

www.gphc.org.uk

Website Information

We are continually updating our website with items of interest for people of all ages including links to other useful websites. If you have access to the internet why don't you visit us at the addresses below:-

Forgewood Housing Co-op - www.forgewoodcoop.org.uk

Garrion People's Housing Co-op - www.gphc.org.uk

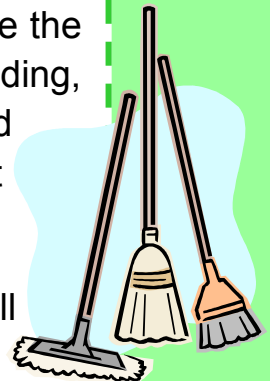
Bridges Housing Association - www.bridgesha.org.uk



Close Cleaning

The Co-op has identified a number of closes in the estate where the common areas have deteriorated through several factors including, general upkeep, tenants not taking turn at sweeping and cleaning, doors being left unlocked and failure to report incidents of vandalism/graffiti.

As a result, we are calling separate close meetings with all tenants concerned and require the co-operation of everyone whose close is affected.



Staff

As you may be aware, the Co-op shares staff with Forgewood Housing Co-op in Motherwell and cover is provided by all staff to both offices. The current staff team is:

John Mulholland, Director
Cathy Brien, Depute Director
Paul Lennon, Housing Manager
Jim Blyth, Maintenance Officer/Clerk of Works
Susan Kane, Sharon O'Rourke & Elaine Hyslop, Housing Officers
Kirsty McCourt, Administration Officer
Kevin Plunkett, Administration Assistant
Billy Gibb, Caretaker
Jim Murphy, Maintenance Assistant
Garry King, Warden, Law View Sheltered Housing Complex, Overtown
Ann Wilson, Relief Warden, Law View Sheltered Housing Complex, Overtown

Useful Telephone Numbers

Community Police: 01698 202636 Citizens Advice: 01698 373388
(Kirstin Mills & Stuart Murray)

Benefits Agency/ 01698 483500 Crimestoppers: 0800 555 111
Job Centre

Council Tax: 01698 403170 Housing Benefit 01236 638615

Northline : 01698 403110

Call Northline for Bulk Uplifts, Pest Control, Abandoned Vehicles, Roads and Lighting, Graffiti Removal, Dog Warden

Garrion People's Housing Co-operative Ltd, 3 Heathfield, Wishaw, ML2 0LY
Opening Hours 9.00am - 4.30pm Monday to Friday
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